



TRUCKLOAD SHIPPING GUIDE

Plus everything you need to know to get a competitive truckload freight rate!

What Defines a Full Truckload?

There are different kinds of truckload shipments and services, such as cold or dry truckload shipments, flatbed freight and heavy haul truckload shipping. A full truckload (FTL) is characterized by filling either a 53' or 48' trailer containing one shipment going from point A to point B, or it can be a multi-stop load which will add costs. It can range from 24 – 30 pallets or more. The amount of space the cargo takes up can be more important than the weight of a truckload shipment. (Learn more about freight optimization and capacity utilization reporting in Orbit TI®.) Weights can vary from 5,000 pounds all the way up to 45,000 pounds, the latter being a more common full truckload weight.

Finding the Right Truckload 3PL or Transportation Provider

Service Offerings: If you know you need a truckload freight provider, do your homework. Not all freight brokers (or 3PLs), are created equally. See what services they offer and make sure that truckload shipping is one of their core competencies, especially if you have temperature-controlled cargo. There are rules and regulations put forth by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) that shippers and brokers must follow regarding perishable freight. A well-seasoned 3PL will be familiar with these regulations, so don't be afraid to ask about them. Ask other shippers about their reputation in the industry. It is also a good idea to check their website and see what relevant organizations they belong to and see if they are recipients of any awards or industry accolades.

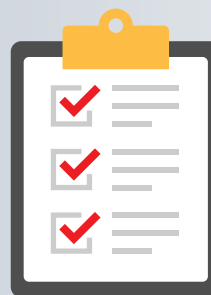
Technology Focused: Now that you know you have selected a top 3PL truckload provider, make sure to find out if they can provide automated solutions, such as tracking, market intelligence, and the ability to access and download paperwork without having to make a phone call. A 3PL that has adopted these technologies in the supply-chain can help you be more efficient and help save costs. Never assume all 3PLs are tech-savvy.

Relationship Building: Being able to build a rapport with someone you like, someone who calls you back, who gives you frequent updates, suggests ways to save you money, and has your best interest at heart is another thing to look out for when searching for the right transportation provider. Having an experienced supply-chain partner can save countless headaches and thousands of dollars.

Providing the Necessary Information

If you are looking for a freight rate for your full truckload shipment, there is a list of things you will be required to provide to the carrier/3PL before you make any rate requests. This may seem obvious, but frequently, one or more of these pieces of information is missing or incorrect, creating problems down the road. Make sure you have ALL the facts, and double-check to make sure all the information is accurate.

EVERY SHIPMENT NEEDS:



- Commodity Type
- Pallet Count
- Pickup and Delivery Address
- Required Shipping Date
- Total Weight
- Value on the Freight
- Dimensions



A large graphic on the right side of the page shows a white semi-truck trailer parked in a lot. A blue diagonal banner with white stars runs from the top left towards the truck. The banner contains the text 'TRUCKLOAD GUIDE' in white capital letters. The truck is a white box trailer with a refrigeration unit on the side.

Commodity Type:

What are you shipping? Is it food, construction material, or corrugated boxes? Costs can wildly vary depending on what you are shipping. For example, high-value loads such as electronics or pharmaceuticals will require more insurance than a truckload of paper towels. Refrigerated loads also will cost more than dry cargo.

Pallet Count:

How many pallets you have and how they can be stacked or configured in the trailer are required information to provide.

Pick Up and Delivery:

Giving accurate and detailed pickup and delivery addresses are necessary to help the driver make sure they can access the freight. Make sure to disclose if there is any special equipment needed, such as specific loading dock information, forklift requirements, etc. Also include phone numbers for all warehouse contacts as well as your own shipper information.

Ship Date:

Is your shipment time-sensitive? Be sure to provide an accurate date and time requested for pick up ready.

Total Weight:

The total weight of the shipment includes the product, the pallets or crates, and any strapping.

Value of Freight:

Be as accurate as possible when stating the value of your freight. If something were to happen and you incurred damage, to receive compensation for the goods, you must have the right value insured.

Dimensions:

The dimensions of the freight helps determine how it can be stacked or loaded into the trailer. This is another piece of information commonly required to get a freight rate.

GETTING THE BEST RATES

Freight rates are not just arbitrarily decided. There are many determining factors that go into each freight movement's price. If you want to get the best full truckload freight rate, understanding what makes costs go super high, or conversely, exceptionally low, can be a game-changer when it comes to sitting at the negotiating table.

Timing: If you have an expedited shipment, it will undoubtedly cost more. If you can give the freight broker ample advanced notice on a load, you can save money. With shipments that are not time-sensitive, you can sometimes get even better pricing through intermodal transport.

Capacity: When capacity is tight and there are not many trucks available in your area, you will see rates rise. Capacity, or truck-to-load ratio, has everything to do with freight rates. It is, unfortunately, nothing that you can control, but it is helpful to understand why your costs are fluctuating.

Weather: Weather can affect rates, especially during winter when snowstorms and poor visibility can determine if roads are

closed or traffic is significantly slowed. Drivers want to avoid these pockets of bad weather and if your freight needs to be delivered in an affected area, capacity may be tight.

Lanes: The lanes or routes your freight travels have a lot to do with pricing. When carriers arrive at their destination, they want to have cargo to pick up in the same area. If your shipment is going to an area that has little to no return freight, the cost will be higher and the number of trucks available to go to that area will be less. Use a 3PL that offers real-time tracking so you will know where your freight is at all times.

Cargo Value: How much your freight is worth will affect the rate you received from your transportation provider. Some brokers do not accept high-value loads. Others have minimum insurance requirements. It is good to ask questions before booking a load with a 3PL for a high-value shipment.

Accessorial Charges: Accessorial charges are always a factor when trying to get a good freight rate. Make sure you know what constitutes an accessorial fee (which are added charges due to extra labor or time required) and how much more it adds to the final cost of the shipment. Needing appointment calls, requiring driver unloading, repacking charges, residential delivery fees, or added insurance requirements can make a huge difference in a price quoted versus a price charged. It is worth the time to comparison shop accessorial from different providers.

Have questions about your shipment? Contact one of our knowledgeable and friendly sales representatives today! We deliver results daily.



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